

# V. Media Relations Tools & Techniques

Below are descriptions and tips for using the most common media relations tools. A combination of these tools, spread over time, is the basis of a good media relations campaign. Use every available channel of communication to get your message out to the community. Always look for fresh “hooks” to increase your media exposure. Be sure to include a contact name, phone number (alternate phone number if available) and email address on all media documents so interested reporters can get in contact with you.

**Please submit copies of all media materials (press releases, media advisories, etc.) to your Regional Coordinator prior to distribution. All grant related media materials must be approved, in advance of their release, by OTS.**

**Media Advisories/Media Alerts** are brief, one-page, written notices designed to alert the media of an upcoming news event, such as a news conference. Advisories include the who, what, where, when and why of your activity. In providing the media with complete information, an advisory should include background information on the existing severity of a traffic safety threat, and introduce the traffic safety program that addresses this problem. The actual name of the program and the dollar amount of the OTS grant should be disclosed as well.

Reporters may want to conduct their own research prior to your event. You can help to point media in the right direction by providing the OTS telephone number (916-262-0990) and the OTS Web site address ([www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov)). Be sure to also include parking information and directions. Language should be enticing and in the future tense.

Advisories should be sent via fax or email two or three days before an event and followed by a phone call. Remember, weekly newspapers need more lead time than dailies. Radio and TV generally need two days notice. Call your local television stations and ask for the name of the News Assignment Editor, who should always receive the media advisory. Some stations may choose not to give you a name and instruct you to send information directly to the News Desk. Always call the media the morning of an event to remind them of the time and location.

**News Releases** offer more information than media advisories and reach more contacts in less time than phone calls. A news release may precede a news event you want covered, be used to make an announcement or provide a response to a current issue or recent story. News releases should be double spaced and one-sided. If possible, limit your news release to one page (no longer than two).

Monitor local daily, weekly and monthly publications to determine which reporters cover your issue. At larger publications, it is important to target specific reporters and section editors. At smaller publications, all media materials may pass directly through the Editor. Consider subscribing to a clipping service, such as Allen's, Burrelle's or Bacon's, if necessary, to collect articles to capture the results of your efforts.

Be sure to organize the information in your news release in order of importance — with the most pertinent information positioned at the top and supporting information toward the bottom. This “pyramid” format ensures that as your news release is edited for available space, key information is more likely to remain part of the story. All key information should be in the first two paragraphs. Include quotes from local authorities or well-known community leaders to support your story. When possible, use digital pictures to complement a news release and provoke interest in the subject. In order to increase your organization's credibility and the likelihood that your release will be read, only send out a release when you have some real news. News releases can be a valuable communication tool, but only if they are really news. News releases can be used for “hard” and “soft” news.

**Fact Sheets** are similar to a media advisory in that they include the same basic who, what, when, where and why of your campaign or event. Fact sheets contain key facts, statistics, dates and milestones and an overall snapshot for readers.

**Calendar Releases** are modified news releases designed to give community calendar editors the basic information about your event. Whenever possible, send calendar releases four to six weeks in advance to ensure inclusion in the media's community calendar. However, check with your local publications to get a more accurate deadline.

**Print and Broadcast Editorials** are used to react to a recent editorial, event or news story, to make a point, state a fact or offer an opinion or also to correct misinformation. These editorials can be submitted to a newspaper, TV or radio station.

- **Letters to the Editor** should be submitted within a few days of the event or activity to which you are responding. Timeliness is key in whether or not your letter will be printed. Letters should be well-written, succinct and to the point. Generally, 75-100 words is the maximum length recommended. Find out what is the preferred format (fax, email, etc.) for submitting letters to the editor for each publication to ensure that your letter will receive the best chance of running. Daily newspapers operate on such a quick time frame that email is often the preferred method for submission. By the time traditional mail arrives, the moment may be lost. Letters should be typed, signed and include a contact name and phone number.
- **Op-Eds** should be written in a news article format, but in an opinionated fashion, outlining your organization's persuasive points and solutions to issues, and citing necessary statistics and facts as back

up to your opinions and/or arguments. Op-Eds should be submitted to the Editorial Page Editor of a newspaper. Similar to a letter to the editor, an op-ed piece provides you with a format to react to an issue, state a fact or express an opinion. Op-eds should also be typed and signed. Maximum length is generally 450 to 600 words (check with each publication to confirm length and submission requirements). *This information can also often be found on the Editorial page of the publication.*

- **Broadcast Editorials** serve the same purpose as a letter to the editor or op-ed piece — to react to an issue, state a fact or offer an opinion. Broadcast Editorials should be directed to the station manager of a TV or radio station. It's always a good idea to call in advance and ask about the specific requirements for submission, including length and format.
- **Editorial Board Briefings** are another route to consider. In an editorial briefing, key members from your agency or organization sit down with the editorial board of your local paper and discuss the matter at hand — traffic congestion, pedestrian safety, DUI among minors, child restraint, etc. — at length. To arrange for an editorial board briefing, submit a letter of request to the editorial page editor. Follow up with a phone call to make your pitch. See what time and date are convenient for them and be prepared to send background information (Suggestion: This is a good way to get your local paper involved with traffic safety issues affecting your community).

**Radio and TV Talk Shows** provide a format for guests to present issues and concerns of interest to the community. Identify the most appropriate programs for reaching your intended audience, including local cable or community-access channels. To place a spokesperson on a talk show, send a pitch letter to the talk show producer indicating why the issue is important to listeners and viewers. Follow-up with a phone call to make your pitch. Plan on submitting your request a few months in advance as talk shows often require significant lead time. Be sure to review Section VI of this resource guide, “Interview Techniques,” prior to the interview.

**Public Service Announcements (PSAs)** are another good way to reach the public. PSAs are used by print and broadcast media as a means of providing community service messages. TV and radio PSAs are generally 15, 20, 30 or 60 seconds in length and are run on radio and television free of charge by the station. To inquire about placing a PSA, call the station's public affairs director and ask what their PSA policy is. Tell them you are interested in producing a PSA and find out how best to proceed. Stations will have different requirements, so it's important to place that call. Competition is fierce for PSA placement, so be sure your topic is timely. The same holds true for print PSAs. These can be in the format of camera-ready ad slicks with a simple message, “Buckle Up Everyone — Children in the Back” or even a logo (if it conveys a message). Inquire about a magazine or newspaper's PSA or filler guidelines. Size specifications greatly vary. Also be sure to plan far in advance as PSA calendars book quickly.

**News Conferences** should be used when you have a visual story or need to get information out to all media sources at once.

- News conferences should be held in a location that is easily accessible to the media and is relevant to the message you are presenting. For example, consider planning your media event at a local elementary school when promoting bicycle safety.
- Make sure the site offers adequate electrical, audio and visual access for reporters.
- Choose a time and date that are convenient for reporters. Usually mornings (not before 9:30 a.m.) or early afternoons on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday generally work well for reporters. Avoid scheduled broadcasts like noon and 5 p.m. Be sure your news conference is not at the same time as another newsworthy event, as you don't want to compete for media attention. Take the time to investigate other events that might overlap with yours so you can avoid any conflicts well ahead of time.
- Alert the media of a news conference by sending out a media advisory two to three days prior to the event. Follow-up with a phone call to confirm that your information was received by the correct person and take advantage of the opportunity to sell your story.
- Choose spokespeople carefully. If possible, prepare remarks for speakers to keep them on track and avoid duplication of remarks. Make sure all spokespeople (five at the most) speak for a short time (2-5 minutes) and are available after the news conference to answer one-on-one questions.
- Have media kits on hand which include: event agenda, news release, fact sheet, contact sheet with speakers names, titles and organizations and a brief backgrounder on your program. Media kits can also be sent to those reporters who were unable to attend your event. Be sure to have media kits delivered within a few hours of your event to ensure that the information is still timely.

**Media Contacts** are a crucial component of a successful media relations plan. It doesn't matter how newsworthy the story or how great the news release or op-ed piece is if the information is not received by the correct media contact. Media databases are available in both hardcopy and electronic format from a variety of sources, including Bacon's Media Directory and Metro California Media, to name a few. These directories are somewhat costly to obtain. Check the yellow pages under Television, Radio, Newspapers and Media or visit your local library. Remember, staff turnover in the media industry is relatively high, so be sure to update your contact list on a regular basis.

**Wire Services**, such as Business Wire, PR NewsWire and Associated Press provide another mechanism for distributing your media materials to a large number of media outlets in a short amount of time. Depending on the wire service, you can select the specific geographic region (California, Northern

California, Bay Area, Los Angeles, etc.) to receive your materials. You can also select applicable trade publications, such as transportation, government, health, etc. Costs associated with using wire services vary depending upon circulation and number of words. Blast fax services are also available to assist with distribution of your materials. Visit the following Web sites for more information on wire services:

- [www.businesswire.com](http://www.businesswire.com)
- [www.prnewswire.com](http://www.prnewswire.com)

**Long Lead Publications**, such as industry newsletters and regional magazines, are another good venue for promoting your program or campaign. Unlike the quick turnaround associated with daily news services, magazines and newsletters require much more lead-time, often several months in advance, to run a story. A bylined article, similar to an op-ed piece can be modified for a magazine or newsletter. Keep in mind that the focus of the article should connect with the intended readers (audience). If you're interested in having an article included in the July issue of a publication, chances are the article will need to be submitted by late April or early May. Careful planning will avoid missed deadlines.

**Follow-Up and Monitoring Efforts** are an important part of any media relations campaign. Distributing the materials is just the beginning. Keep the issue alive by writing letters to columnists and responding to articles and editorials. Make follow-up calls to ensure that your news release, calendar release or op-ed lands in the right hands. (See instructions on page 3-4 regarding submission of media clips to OTS.)

To formally track successful media placements, utilize one of the media tracking services in your community. Look under Clipping Bureau in your local yellow pages for media tracking services.

## Visual Ideas

As previously noted, the television media are more likely to cover your traffic safety story if you make it as visual as possible. The following are ideas to include in your news conference or media interview.

### DUI:

- Provide tours of command vehicles used in sobriety checkpoints.
- Demonstrate fatal vision goggles. Have them on hand for members of the media to try.
- Display the remains of a vehicle involved in a crash with a drunk driver.
- Surround a car or motorcycle with a mock jail cell (made from PVC pipe or wrought iron) or attach a ball-and-chain prop (made of papier mâché or plastic) to the vehicle. Include signage that reads, "Impounded."

- Create a tombstone with names of community members who were killed by drunk drivers. Be sure to obtain written permission from the families to release the names of loved ones prior to your event.
- Use stuffed animals or dolls to represent children killed by drunk drivers.
- Decorate an empty playground in flowers and bows as a symbol of goodbye to children killed by drunk drivers.
- Conduct a sobriety test demonstration with a media personality or traffic reporter.
- Display pairs of shoes that symbolize people lost to impaired driving.
- Coordinate Grim Reaper classroom visits to high school students.
- Hold a candlelight vigil.
- Release doves, as a symbolic gesture of hope.
- Place ribbons on patrol cars.
- Have media personality play a video game while consuming alcohol to illustrate impact on reaction time.
- Prepare non-alcoholic “mocktails” on cooking segments on TV or radio shows to promote responsible holiday celebrations.
- Hold event at the scene of a DUI crash.

#### Occupant Protection:

- Coordinate a rollover simulator demonstration to illustrate impact of a crash.
- Drop a watermelon off a three-story building onto the windshield of a junked car to represent impact of crash.
- Display a damaged child safety seat that saved a child’s life.
- Display a damaged child safety seat involved in a collision to illustrate non-use of damaged seats.
- Remove damaged or recalled safety seats by tossing into dump truck.
- Utilize Vince & Larry, crash test dummies, to generate enthusiasm at community events.

#### Emergency Medical Equipment:

- Life Flight helicopters, ambulances and fire trucks all make great backgrounds for media events.
- Uniformed EMS personnel (life flight crew, firefighters, paramedics).
- Conduct CPR or “jaws of life” demonstrations.

#### Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety:

- Display a damaged helmet worn by a cyclist who survived a crash.
- Have a stunt bicycle team perform to illustrate proper bicycle safety.
- Have police officers on bicycles conduct demonstrations about proper riding and safety techniques.
- Host a check station for proper helmet fitting.
- Offer safety inspections of bicycles and bicycle equipment.
- Drop two melons, one unprotected and one that is safely nestled in a bicycle helmet, from an elevated platform to simulate the impact of a crash with, and without, protective headgear.

- Line up small bicycles or bicycle helmets in a row to illustrate the number of children killed or injured in cycling collisions.
- Use backdrop of traffic signs (stop, yield, railroad crossing, traffic light) for media events.

### Speed Control

- Position radar trailers near the event. The media and other attendees can monitor the speed of passing traffic.
- Create large signage, including illustrations and graphs that detail the technical advantages of the Stealth Stat devices.
- Demonstrate the nighttime data collection capabilities of the Stealth Stat device.
- Have children create and display poster size drawings that feature speed regulation devices and speed control messages.

### **Special Media Events**

The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds and the U.S. Navy Blue Angels have been invaluable partners to OTS and CHP in promoting traffic safety. Both the Thunderbirds and the Blue Angels are featured in PSAs, including television, cable, radio and print, that promote anti-DUI, Occupant Protection, and Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety messages. Additionally, the U.S. Marine Corps Fat Albert Airlines are a favorite among small children and have been successful in promoting traffic safety issues targeting children and parents. Together, these air demonstration teams have reached over nine million Californians. You may consider these groups for the promotion of your campaign. Contact the Public Information Officers at the following internet addresses:

- USAF Thunderbirds  
<http://www.airforce.com>
- Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron –  
Blue Angels & Fat Albert Airlines, USMC  
<http://www.blueangels.navy.mil>



# Sample Media Advisory

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

**OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY**  
7000 FRANKLIN BLVD., SUITE 440  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95823-1899  
(916) 262-0990  
(800) 735-2329 (T/TDD-Referral)  
(916) 262-2960 (FAX)

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR  
SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK, SECRETARY



DATE

Contact:

Name

Phone Number

## DESCRIPTIVE HEADLINE

### Sub-Headline with Key Supporting Information

- WHAT:** Describe what is happening at event or news conference. What is the reason for holding the event — to educate or inform the public about a specific traffic safety issue, create awareness, release information?
- WHO:** List speakers and participants in order of importance, including titles. Double-check the spelling of all names.
- WHERE:** Include exact location including street address, floor, suite number and parking instructions. Be sure to include an alternate location in case of inclement weather. Have a backup location secured in advance.
- WHEN:** Include day of week, date and exact time. Specify a.m. or p.m. Double-check dates and times for accuracy.
- WHY:** Why the event is taking place? Highlight key statistics supporting your issue and make the story local.
- VISUALS:** Include key visual elements which will help the media tell the story, including demonstrations of traffic safety equipment, children on bicycles, safety seat demonstrations, crashed vehicles, etc. Remember, pictures sell the story.

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ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR  
SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK, SECRETARY



## **MEDIA ADVISORY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 5, 2003

**Contact:** Mike Marando, Office of Traffic Safety  
(916) 262-2975/office (916) 296-5465/cell  
Tom Marshall, California Highway Patrol  
(916) 657-7202/office

### **State Launches Aggressive Crackdown on Drunk Driving More than 310 Law Enforcement Agencies Taking Part Statewide**

**WHAT:** "COPtails" news conference to kick-off California's annual Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month campaign. More than 330 law enforcement agencies statewide, including the California Highway Patrol, will be taking part in regional 'Avoid' programs to conduct saturation patrols and sobriety checkpoints to deter impaired driving during the holidays.

The "COPtails" event will feature officers from the California Highway Patrol and Sacramento area law enforcement agencies serving complimentary, non-alcoholic "COPtails" to restaurant patrons as a reminder to celebrate responsibly during the holiday season.

**WHO:** Christopher Murphy, Deputy Director, California Office of Traffic Safety; John Rolin, Chief, California Highway Patrol; Dr. David Manning, Region IX Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; Jerry R. Jolly, Acting Director, Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control; John Dunlap, President & CEO, California Restaurant Association; Law enforcement from throughout the greater Sacramento region

**WHEN:** Tuesday, December 9th  
News conference 11 a.m. - COPtails complimentary drink service 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**WHERE:** FAT CITY BAR & CAFE  
1001 Front Street (Old Sacramento)

**WHY:** Alcohol-related fatalities have increased in California for the fourth consecutive year after more than a decade of decline. Since 1998, California has experienced a 32 percent increase in the number of people killed in alcohol-involved collisions. In 2002 1,416 people were killed and 32,071 injured in alcohol-involved crashes in California, up from 1,308 and 31,806 in 2001\*.

*(\*) denotes CHP provisional data*

**Editors Note** Additional "COPtails" events will be held at Momo's in San Francisco on December 10th, the Elephant Bar in Fresno on December 11th, the Daily Grill in Los Angeles on December 16th and Moose McGillycuddy's in San Diego on December 17th.

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# Sample Calendar Release

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

**OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY**  
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SACRAMENTO, CA 95823-1899  
(916) 262-0990  
(800) 735-2329 (T/TDD-Referral)  
(916) 262-2960 (FAX)

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR  
SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK, SECRETARY



## CALENDAR RELEASE

Contact:

Name, organization  
Phone Number

DATE

## DESCRIPTIVE HEADLINE Sub-Headline with Key Supporting Information

**WHAT:** Name of Event  
Brief description

**WHEN/WHERE:** Date  
Location  
Time

**WHY:** Explain the purpose of event.

# # #

# Sample News Release

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

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(800) 735-2329 (T/TDD-Referral)  
(916) 262-2960 (FAX)

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR  
SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK, SECRETARY



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 3, 2003

**Contact:** Mike Marando, Office of Traffic Safety  
(916) 262-2975/office (916) 296-5465/cell  
Tom Marshall, California Highway Patrol  
(916) 657-7202/office

### California Puts the Brakes on Impaired Driving

*More than 310 Agencies Take Part in Sobriety Checks in December*

(Sacramento, Calif.) —There will be no holiday for the State's law enforcement community later this month as agencies statewide prepare for a concentration of sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols aimed at deterring impaired driving and removing drunk drivers from California roadways. Funded in part by federal grants from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) through the Business, Transportation & Housing Agency (BT&H), the concentrated efforts planned to coincide with December's annual Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month will include the California Highway Patrol and local law enforcement agencies across the state.

Nationally and statewide, fatalities in alcohol-related crashes are on the rise. With California experiencing an increase in alcohol-related crashes for the fourth consecutive year after more than a decade of decline, the State isn't taking this trend lightly.

"The Highway Patrol is very concerned about the increase in impaired driving," said CHP Commissioner D.O. "Spike" Helmick. "We want people to know that it's a serious call to motorists not to drink and drive. I can assure you a DUI is not a pleasant experience and it can affect the rest of your life."

Why the tough stance? Despite tireless efforts by law enforcement to stop drunk and drugged driving, many people mistakenly continue to dismiss impaired driving as if it were a minor offense.

"The Schwarzenegger Administration has made impaired driving a top priority for traffic safety funding to better enable local law enforcement to do their job," said BT&H Secretary, Sunne Wright McPeak. "By working together, we can lessen the economical and societal impacts of impaired driving."

Part of California's solution involves the expansion of a model which began in Santa Clara County in the 1970's, known as "Avoid," which brings multiple law enforcement agencies together to conduct regional sobriety checkpoints, patrols and coordinated public information. The "Avoid" program covers most of the state, with more than 310 agencies slated to participate in regional DUI-prevention efforts this month.

*(more)*

## Sample News Release (cont'd)

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“The goal of the Avoid programs is really to act as a deterrent,” said McPeak. “Studies conducted in California and across the nation all show that extensive checkpoint activity results in a substantial reduction in alcohol-related crashes, injuries and deaths in the communities in which they are held. It’s all about saving lives.”

In 2002, 1,416 people were killed and 32,041 injured in alcohol-related crashes in California, up from 1,308 fatalities and 31,806 injuries in 2001.

In observance of Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month, the OTS and CHP, along with the California Restaurant Association, encourage Californians to not only celebrate responsibly by using designated drivers, but also making sure they wear seat belts on each and every ride.

Here are some common sense tips for enjoying the holiday season safely:

- Always have a designated driver on hand whenever alcohol is served.
- Never serve alcohol to minors. California has a zero tolerance policy that will be enforced.
- Talk to young people about the dangers and consequences of impaired driving.
- Provide non-alcoholic beverages at holiday celebrations.
- Think about the evening in advance. Decide on your choice of alternatives before you go.

###

**Editors note:** For information on law enforcement agencies taking part in an “Avoid” program in your area, please contact Mike Marando at (916) 262-2975 or via email at [mmarando@ots.ca.gov](mailto:mmarando@ots.ca.gov).

*\*Statistics based on California Highway Patrol 2002 provisional data.*

# Sample Fact Sheet

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

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## FACTS & FIGURES

### 2003 Drunk & Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month IMPAIRED DRIVING FACTS & FIGURES

#### National 2002 Crash Statistics\*

- 17,419 people were killed and 258,000 people were injured in alcohol-related crashes nationwide.
- Last year alcohol was involved in 41 percent of all fatal crashes.
- Approximately three in every 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash during their lifetime.
- In 2002, there was one alcohol-related fatality every 30 minutes.

#### California 2002 Crash Statistics\*\*

- 1,411 people were killed and 32,041 were injured in alcohol-related crashes in California.
- Alcohol involved traffic fatalities increased 7.9 percent in 2002 - the fourth consecutive increase after more than a decade of decline.
- There were 1,269 alcohol-involved fatal collisions and 20,735 alcohol-involved injury collisions statewide.
- DUI arrests in California increased by 3.7 percent in 2002.
- The average age of an arrested DUI offender was 34 years of age.
- September 12, 2000, marked the first day California was without a traffic fatality since May 1, 1991.

*\*National statistics are based on FARS 2002 Early Assessment of Motor Vehicle Crashes, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).*

*\*\*California statistics are based on California Highway Patrol 2002 provisional data and Department of Motor Vehicles 2002-DUI MIS Report.*

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# Sample Pitch Letter

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

**OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY**  
7000 FRANKLIN BLVD., SUITE 440  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95823-1899  
(916) 262-0990  
(800) 735-2323 (T/TDD-Referral)  
(916) 262-2960 (FAX)

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR  
SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK, SECRETARY



DATE

Dear Public Affairs Director,

How many children in the San Diego area regularly begin the ritual of summer with a bicycle ride in the neighborhood? And of those children, how many regularly wear bicycle helmets? Many parents don't strictly enforce the use of bicycle helmets when children are not on busy streets or are riding close to home.

Nearly 31 percent of cyclists killed in traffic crashes in the United States are between the ages of five and fifteen. Last year in San Diego County, more than 1,100 people suffered bicycle-related injuries, and the majority of those injured were not wearing helmets. Wearing a bicycle helmet can reduce the chance of head injury by 85 percent.

Safe Moves, a non-profit bicycle and traffic safety education organization funded by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) through the Business, Transportation & Housing Agency, has helped to educate more than 1.9 million children and adults across California each year with live-saving information. But now we need your help. We need to educate parents that wearing a bicycle helmet is not only a smart thing to do, but it's the law. Any cyclist under the age of 18 is required by California law to wear a bicycle helmet while riding.

This is an important issue that can help save the lives of children in your community. Please call me at your earliest convenience to schedule an interview with a Safe Moves coordinator. I can be reached at (916) 262-0980.

Thank you in advance for your interest in this important issue.

Sincerely,

Name

Organization

# Sample Feature/Food Editor Release

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

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7000 FRANKLIN BLVD., SUITE 440  
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(916) 262-0990  
(800) 735-2329 (T/TDD-Relerral)  
(916) 262-2960 (FAX)

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR  
SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK, SECRETARY



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 3, 2003

**CONTACT:** Leslie Huffman,  
California Restaurant Association  
(916) 431-2726  
Mike Marando,  
Office of Traffic Safety  
(916) 262-2975

## **Spike Your Holiday Party With Alcohol-Free Fun**

*December is California's Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month*

(Sacramento, Calif.) —The holidays are upon us and 'tis the season to be jolly.' From Thanksgiving to New Years Eve, family, friends and co-workers will gather together to eat, drink and be merry. But if those dear to you have been consuming alcoholic beverages, they are in serious danger once they get behind the wheel to drive home. And they're putting millions of California motorists at risk too.

The Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), California Highway Patrol (CHP) and California Restaurant Association (CRA) want to remind Californians to celebrate safely at upcoming family and office parties by designating a sober driver and making sure to always wear a seat belt, every time you take a ride.

"California restaurants and bars welcome holiday parties and gatherings this time of year," said John Dunlap, CRA president and CEO. "We all want our guests to have a wonderful time and know, that to be a truly excellent host, the safety of our guests must be top of mind." Whether you are the manager of a five star restaurant or the host of a party in your own home, it is imperative that your guests do not end up in the back of a patrol car or, much worse, in an alcohol-related collision.

Last year in California 1,416 people were killed and more than 32,000 were injured in alcohol-involved collisions. Additionally 179,663 arrests were made in 2002 for impaired driving.

This month alone, more than 310 local law enforcement agencies, and the CHP, will saturate the state with sobriety checkpoints and DUI patrols. "We're making sure law enforcement have the resources they need in terms of staffing and equipment to do their job," said Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary of the California Business, Transportation & Housing Agency. "The only way

(more)



## Sample Feature/Food Editor Release (cont'd)

*Release - Page 2*

to really prevent impaired driving is to see that a friend or loved one who has been drinking doesn't get behind the wheel of a car in the first place."

There's no need to put a damper on holiday festivities for those guests who aren't drinking. The OTS, CHP and CRA suggest the following tips for safe and fun holiday celebrations:

- When greeting your guests, find out who the designated drivers are. Collect car keys from the others and start a money collection at the door for a taxi fund.
- Have a special bar for designated drivers at your holiday gathering where guests can create their own "mocktails." Stock it with non-alcoholic drink mixers, including a variety of fruit juices, lemon-lime and club soda, non-alcoholic champagne and fun garnishes (maraschino cherries, fresh sprigs of mint, whipped cream, candy canes, cinnamon sticks, etc). Don't forget the festive stemware and flavored sugars for the rim.
- Develop your own 'signature' non-alcoholic drink or borrow one of ours. Something red, using cranberry or cherry juice is always festive. We especially like the black cherry champagne served in a tall champagne flute.
- Have a contest for the best non-alcoholic drink, with your guests as the judges. Award the winner with a bottle of non-alcoholic champagne.
- Serve plenty of great hors d'oeuvres or try a festive sorbet served in a martini glass. With so many fabulous treats to taste, guests won't be tempted to head straight for the bar.
- Plan activities to keep guests entertained. Great music, dancing, caroling or gift exchanges will make spirits bright, even without alcohol.
- Do not have an "open bar." Have a trusted friend act as a bartender and pour appropriately.

For more information regarding California's 3D Month campaign, please visit [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov).

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**Editors note:** Attached are sample non-alcoholic beverage recipes for inclusion in holiday articles during California's 3D Month, courtesy of CSAA's *Cheers!* program.

*\*Statistics based on California Highway Patrol 2002 provisional data. DUI arrests data provided by the Department of Justice, Bureau of Criminal Statistics.*

## Sample Feature/Food Editor Release (cont'd)

### Non-Alcoholic Drink Recipes

Liven up your party without alcohol this holiday season by trying one of these delicious beverages:

#### Sinful Sangria

2 liters alcohol-free red wine	2 green apples
1 liter grape juice	2 red apples
10 fresh oranges	2 lbs. seedless grapes

- Spread grapes in a single layer on a baking sheet. Freeze overnight.
- Wash oranges with slightly soapy water (removes pesticides). Rinse. Cut into small wedges.
- Dice apples into large chunks.
- Combine oranges, apples, wine and grape juice in a large serving bowl. Chill overnight.
- Add frozen grapes immediately before serving.

Serves 20

#### Winter Wassail

1 quart apple juice	16 cinnamon sticks (10 for garnish)
1 quart apple cider	8 whole cloves
8 oranges	6 whole allspice berries
4 lemons	1/4 teaspoon mace

1. In a large pot, combine apple juice and cider. Wash and slice oranges and add them to the pot.
2. Create a spice bouquet by wrapping 6 cinnamon sticks, cloves, allspice and mace in piece of cheesecloth or muslin. Add to juice. Simmer for at least 30 minutes.
3. Ladle into mugs. Garnish with a cinnamon stick.

Serves 10

#### Black Cherry Champagne

1 bottle alcohol-free champagne	lemon zest
black cherry juice	superfine sugar
black or maraschino cherries, with stems	

1. Sugar-frost two tall champagne glasses:
  - Wet rim of glass with water or by running a lemon or lime slice around the edge.
  - Turn glass upside down and dip gently in a saucer of superfine sugar.
2. Fill glasses with 2/3 chilled champagne and 1/3 chilled cherry juice.
3. Garnish with a cherry caressed by a piece of lemon zest.

Serves 2

*All recipes courtesy of the Hard Rock Café, as published by the California State Automobile Association in Cheers!, a collection of non-alcoholic drink recipes.*

# Sample Letter to the Editor

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

**OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY**  
7000 FRANKLIN BLVD., SUITE 440  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95823-1899  
(916) 262-0990  
(800) 735-2329 (T/TDD-Relerral)  
(916) 262-2960 (FAX)

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR  
SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK, SECRETARY



December 3, 2003

Dear Editor,

After more than a decade of decline, alcohol-related injuries and fatalities have increased in California for the fourth consecutive year. Statewide, the number of people killed in alcohol-involved collisions increased 8 percent from 2001 to 2002. Six percent might not sound like much, but that's more than 100 lives lost.

Despite the efforts of law enforcement and dedicated groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and hundreds of others, Californians are once again mistakenly dismissing a DUI as if it were a speeding ticket. It's far from it. Motorists need to know that a DUI is not a slap on the wrist and there are no second chances. Drunk driving is a serious crime that not only has the potential to destroy the lives of victims, but the driver as well.

At best, a DUI means losing a drivers license, having your car impounded and paying up to \$10,000 in fines and court costs. The flip side can mean the end of a career, the death of a child or spouse or being left paralyzed for life.

California's not pulling any punches. The Business, Transportation & Housing Agency is directing the Office of Traffic Safety in making it a priority to provide the California Highway Patrol and local law enforcement agencies with the resources needed to do their job effectively to deter impaired driving and remove drunk drivers from our roads. During FY 2004, \$15 million in funding will be directed to education and equipment for the enforcement of California's DUI laws. And this month alone, more than 310 law enforcement agencies throughout the state will take part in a concentration of sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols.

If you're a drunk driver, your odds of getting off are not good. As the holidays approach, I ask all Californians to take it upon themselves to prevent friends and the ones you love from getting behind the wheel while impaired by drugs or alcohol. By making the choice to enjoy the holidays responsibly, such as designating a driver and always wearing a seat belt, we will put an end to this deadly trend.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sunne Wright McPeak'.

SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK  
Secretary  
California Business, Transportation & Housing Agency

**Editor's Note:** We encourage you to bring this important issue to your readers' attention during the holiday season. For more information on DUI programs in California, please contact Mike Marando, Office of Traffic Safety, at (916) 262-2975.

*\*Statistics from the California Highway Patrol SWITTERS provisional report.*

# Sample Op-Ed Piece

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BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

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SUNNE WRIGHT McPEAK, SECRETARY



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
December 3, 2003

**CONTACT:** Mike Marando, OTS  
(916) 262-2975

## HIDDEN DANGERS

*By Sunne Wright McPeak*  
*Secretary, California Business, Transportation & Housing Agency*

Anyone who drives the freeways in California during the morning or evening commute knows how frustrating it can be — sitting in traffic, aggressive drivers, tailgaters and a multitude of other traffic sins that make us crazy on a daily basis.

Many Californians have just come to accept these ills as part of life in the Golden State. But there is a serious traffic safety problem that is not as obvious and you don't necessarily see every day. It may take the form of your coworker heading home after the company holiday party or your best friend after happy hour. Or maybe it's you on New Years Eve and you have not made arrangements for a ride home. That hidden threat is drunk drivers.

Alcohol-related crashes have increased in California for the fourth consecutive year after more than a decade of decline. We're not alone. The same thing is happening on the national level. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 41 percent of all fatal crashes involved alcohol in 2002. Why the slide backward? Our population is growing, we're experiencing an increase in teen drivers and unfortunately, many people mistakenly continue to dismiss impaired driving as if it were a speeding ticket. It's far from it.

Last year California experienced 1,416 fatalities and more than 32,000 injuries in alcohol-related crashes — up from 1,308 deaths and 31,806 injuries the year before. This is a very serious problem and we're doing something about it.

The Office of Traffic Safety through the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency is providing mini-grant funds to 100 local law enforcement agencies that join 25 regional Avoid programs, including 310 law enforcement agencies from Eureka to San Diego, to take part in sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols designed to enforce the state's DUI laws during the holiday season. That includes staff time for more officers on the roads, support for regional sobriety checkpoints and new technology, including Portable Evidential Breath Test (PEBT) devices.

These tools assist traffic safety practitioners throughout California in removing impaired drivers from the road. California earned MADD's highest rating (B+) on its Rating the States DUI report card.

Thousands of law enforcement officers throughout the state are going to be working very hard to get as many drunk drivers off the roads as possible before they injure, kill or paralyze your wife, your brother, your best friend or your daughter. We would much rather prevent impaired driving before someone gets behind the wheel instead of cleaning it up on the backend with a body bag. Wouldn't you?

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